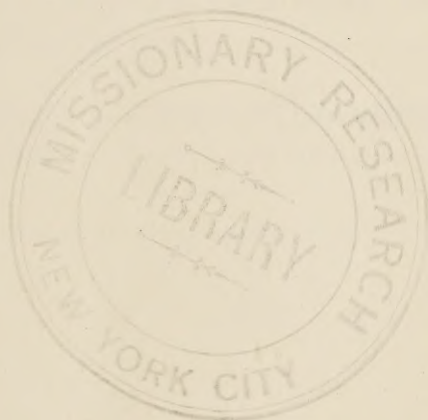
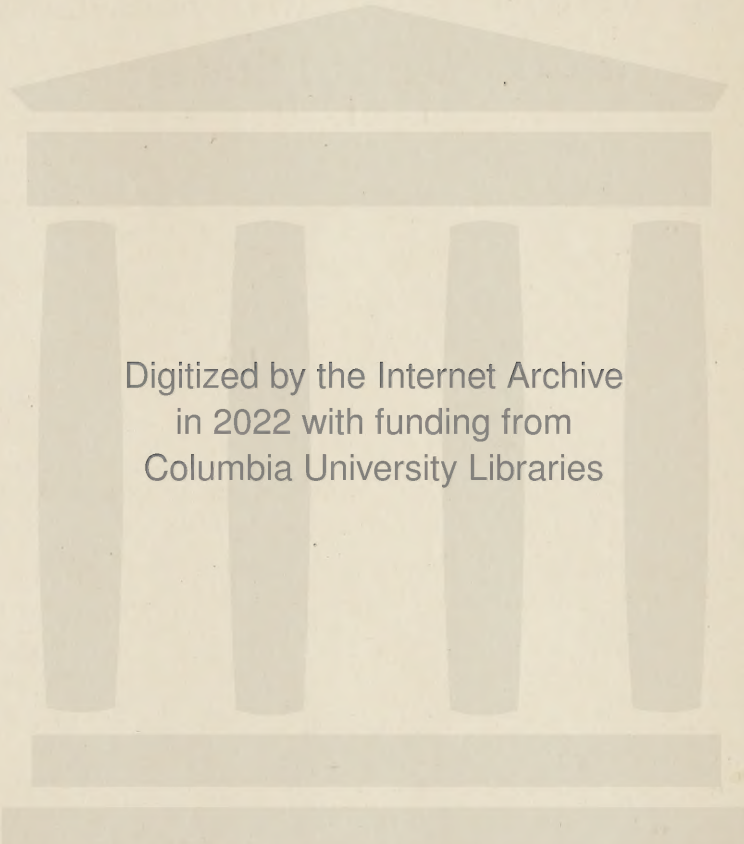


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Report of Commission on International and Interracial Factors in the Problem of Mexicans in the United States

REV. GEO. L. CADY, D.D., *Chairman*





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Notes for Report of Commission on International and Interracial Factors in the Problem of Mexicans in the United States

INTRODUCTION

THIS conference is intended to provide a section in a comprehensive study of the Latin-American peoples in North America, with special reference to the development of Christian relations between Anglo-Americans and Latin-Americans and the fulfillment of Christian obligations between these rather sharply diverse elements of the population of North America. There will probably also be a Caribbean Conference and a Mexico-Central America Conference. These three regional conferences together will complete a study of Latin-Americans in North America, corresponding to the study of South America at Montevideo nearly two years ago.

A splendid beginning was made in a fresh and larger recognition of the relations and obligations between Anglo-Americans and Latin-Americans in the Panama Congress of 1916. At that time, however, certain factors which now seem basal in the whole matter had not yet emerged into prominence. There was no Commission on International and Interracial Factors among the eight commissions which presented their elaborate reports at the Panama Congress. How much the success of missions to Latin-American peoples is conditioned upon social and governmental attitudes and upon the general feeling of respect and confidence between the governments and the individuals of the Latin-American nations and the Anglo-Americans had not been clearly recognized.

No missionary enterprise can longer be looked upon merely as propaganda or as uplift. It is an appreciation and a sharing between different racial cultures. The technique of such adjustment to another culture, yielding nothing in zeal for one's own but respecting and understanding the other, is now being made the subject of most serious study by the leaders of sociological thought in our great universities, as well as by forward-looking missionary statesmen.

Several things have combined to turn the attention of the United States very strongly toward Mexico and Latin-American interests the past year. Primarily, perhaps, the large immigration from Mexico, unrestricted by any quota, which has come in response to economic demands; then the definite advance toward establishment of stable and progressive government in Mexico, the problems of oil and land and ecclesiasticism in Mexico, and of Mexican cheap labor and dependency of Mexican immigrants in the United States. Growing out of the need of the hour our missionary agencies have produced mission study books on Latin-America and Latin-Americans both south and north of the Rio Grande which have been very widely studied and have had great value in developing public opinion.

The text-book by Vernon McCombs, "From Over the Border" and

magazine articles by Charles A. Thomson and others have accomplished much in opening up to general public consideration the problem of Mexican immigration into the United States, which is the particular topic before this conference. State departments of education, chambers of commerce, farm bureaus, charity organizations, commissions of Congress, as well as the universities and the churches, have been collecting facts and studying the situation, and we come to this conference with a comparatively large body of data concerning the Mexicans in the United States, although the situation, with all its social implications, has developed so rapidly that only a very few have realized its proportions.

This is not the place to discuss numbers of Mexican immigrants in the United States, nor the economic consequences of their coming. But the position in the program given to our report makes it necessary to say at the beginning that for volume and extent of economic consequences Mexican immigration has far exceeded that of all the *Oriental*s, Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos and Hindus. The number of *Negroes* of all shades of color in the United States is probably *only four times* the number of Latin-Americans in the United States. Negroes have been with us since the year before the Pilgrims landed, the Latin-Americans have poured in during the last ten or fifteen years.

Your commission has secured facts from a large variety of sources, special investigations along the border and in California and Mexico by members of the commission, including interviews with business men, ranchers and government officials, the current periodical literature on the subject in both countries, government documents and reports from persons qualified by special observation of the Mexican immigrants and special training in the study of immigrant groups. Among these persons were fourteen Chamber of Commerce secretaries and the secretary of the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, twenty-two professors in colleges, superintendents of schools, principals, supervisors, home teachers, including the State Superintendent of Immigrant Education of California, twenty-one ranchers and business men, twenty-one federal, city and county officials, thirty pastors, missionaries and missionary superintendents. Fourteen Mexicans submitted important data on the subject, and many other Mexicans responded to interviews. Among them were government representatives, pastors of churches, a labor leader and special students. Data has been received from seven great railroad systems and from several large industrial enterprises. Conditions of Mexicans in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, and in the cities of Detroit, Chicago and Kansas City have been reported, as well as throughout the Southwest.

Several persons have submitted to the commission full statements concerning the points suggested in a preliminary analysis of the subject, statements which are of very great value, and deserve presentation as separate papers. McCombs' book and Thomson's articles in the current periodical literature would alone have furnished material sufficient for a pretty thorough study of our topic. A large amount of most valuable data, as well as the expression of representative opinion, is included in the material on which this report is based. The commission wishes to thank most cordially the many who have done such important work on this topic, and particularly Mr. J. H. Batten, director of Extension work of Pomona College and secretary of the Friends of Mexico Conference, by whom much of the material was solicited.

SECTION I.

Relations between Mexico and the United States and between the People of the Two Countries, as Affected by Immigration.

Without attempting any conclusions as to the volume and economic significance of Mexican immigration into the United States, your commission has sought to discover the results of such immigration upon relations between the governments of the United States and Mexico and between the people of the two countries in their personal relations and common habits of thought in the United States itself.

The Commissioner of Immigration in his report for 1923-1924 states: "Until the general immigration law of 1917 was enacted, the restrictions on immigration from Canada and Mexico were so mild that residents of those countries had little reason to enter illegally. They were exempt from the head tax which had long been imposed on overseas immigrants; there was no literacy test; and those who measured up to the rather simple requirements of the law were free to come in unlimited numbers. The act of 1917, however, imposed a head tax of \$8.00 on Canadians and Mexicans in common with all other immigrants and, like all other peoples, they were subjected to the reading test provided in that law. As might have been expected, these two provisions immediately resulted in widespread evasion of the law."

From 1917 to 1921, special orders admitted Mexicans for seasonal labor with the understanding that employers would return them to their home land. Mexicans are still being received as contract laborers, but generally by evasion of the law. At the last session of Congress there were extensive hearings on a bill to admit contract laborers for temporary residence without the charge of \$18.00 now levied on each Mexican immigrant who enters legally. There has been an insistent demand from agriculturists in Texas, Arizona and California for seasonal labor, and as a result the coming of Mexican laborers has been "greatly stimulated by United States labor rustlers in Mexico." Recent papers published in Mexico City have called attention to the very extensive new business of soliciting and exploiting emigrants from Mexico, in which both Mexicans and Americans engage. Similarly, Japanese emigration to the United States before 1908 was promoted as a lucrative business by special Japanese companies until the Japanese government was compelled to interfere.

Many incidents have occurred in connection with Mexican immigration which have caused certain embarrassment to the governments of Mexico and the United States and much more to individuals involved. "A few years ago, a train of twenty freight cars full of Mexican immigrants was turned back at the border because the labor market was fully supplied, and it cost the Mexican government nearly \$20,000 to return these people to their homes." "At the railroad station in Los Angeles" one social worker reports, "pressure was being exerted on able-bodied Mexicans to remain in the United States without employment until the sugar beet season, while grandfathers, wives and other relatives not desired for unskilled labor were being railroaded off into Mexico." "Stranded cotton workers in Arizona have been taken back to Mexico on trucks by the Mexican government." The Mexican consuls in the Southwest are frequently compelled to provide for dependent Mexicans in the United States or those who have become involved with the law.

The extent of smuggled Mexican immigration is hard to estimate. Most admit that it has been far in excess of the admissions through immigration officers. In January of this year the chief inspector of the immigration service after an extended survey in the Imperial Valley estimated the illegal entries as seventy to seventy-five per cent of the total number of Mexican laborers. It is conservatively estimated that eighty per cent of the entire number of Mexicans in California entered "without benefit of" immigration offices. Only 32,000 Mexicans legally crossed the border in 1924, of whom 5,000 came to California. But one small district in Central California uses over 20,000 Mexican laborers. The Cotton Growers' Association of the Salt River Valley in Arizona brought in 33,000 Mexicans before 1921, and 20,000 last year. The number of immigrants officially reported is but a fraction of those known to be in the country. In El Paso it is stated by those in a position to know that half of the Mexican residents have not been legally admitted and many are afraid to cross the bridge lest they should be refused readmission. One missionary superintendent reported that in a carload of laborers being taken north, forty-five per cent by actual count had been smuggled in. Smuggling of Mexicans across the border and the proposal for a joint commission of Mexicans and Americans to stop this practice was discussed recently in the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor.

In a recent address in New York, Commissioner of Immigration Hull stated that there were about half a million Mexicans in the United States who had never had any certification from immigration authorities. This statement is doubtless very conservative, as one might expect from an official source. In his annual report just issued Commissioner Hull favors establishing a quota for Mexico. He reports the immigrants legally admitted from Mexico during the year ending June 30, 1926, as 54,446. The quota for Mexico if our present law was applied would be, exclusive of the exempt classes, only 1,557. Estimating illegal entries on the basis suggested by several of our correspondents there might have been half a million Mexicans who crossed the border in twelve months ending June 30, 1926. One correspondent reports there is "constant lobbying in Washington to prevent Mexicans being put on a quota basis." Instead of a consistent immigration policy for the whole country which would admit fifteen hundred Mexicans a year, we yield to a local demand from a relatively small group in the Southwest, and tolerate the inrush of half a million.

Recently a Consul of Mexico in one of the larger cities of Texas appealed to the labor commissioner of his district to assist him in finding work for some six thousand idle Mexicans. The commissioner said he could do nothing about it until he was told that five thousand had come in illegally and that the consul could ship them back to Mexico at the expense of the labor commission. Then he was eager to offer assistance.

The immigration from Mexico has always been largely determined by labor demand rather than by the severity or laxity of immigration restrictions. One reports that "*actual laborers* are rarely deported. Some suspicious persons are sent back, but for every one sent back ten are smuggled in every day." An ingenious plan was devised in the Imperial Valley and approved by the immigration authorities to legitimize the smuggled laborers. If the illegal entrants would come into a registration office and pay the \$10.00 consular visa fee and the \$8.00 head tax on the installment plan they would be given pass books and their partial payments

recorded until they had cleared their record and could receive proper papers. About six thousand were willing to pay, now that they had the chance to earn, and were therefore absolved from their illegal status. This seemed an easy and natural way out of the difficulties for the Mexican immigrants and the agriculturists who needed them. It is not, however, the conception of American government which we would prefer to have our immigrants receive.

It has been so easy in many places to wade across the Rio Grande that the "bootleg" immigrants by that route are called "wetbacks" to distinguish them from those who attempt to get across at some point of the 1833 miles of unmarked boundary line between the countries. Immigration inspectors are now much more successful than formerly in stopping such immigrants. All busses from Laredo to San Antonio are searched on a main highway twenty miles back from the border. One of the Home Missions Council party studying the situation on the border last spring was detained and questioned by an immigration officer before being allowed to take a train from El Paso for the North.

Yet there remains even now a considerable amount of bootleg immigration. The railroads run trainloads of Mexicans up into Colorado for the seasonal labor in the beet sugar season and back to the border after the work is over. Unquestionably, large numbers of these laborers and their families come and go across the border at will.

There is widespread resentment among Americans along the border and in California because the Mexican is such a heavy charge on the charities of the community. However, one experienced social worker thinks it a good sign that "Mexicans take advantage of clinics, etc., till they swamp them in Los Angeles. This is more helpful than otherwise, though the charity agencies seem to tear their hair over it." In Los Angeles County, according to the 1925 survey, the Mexicans, with only one-twentieth the population, had one-quarter of the poverty. One-third of the budget reported by the County Charities was spent on Mexican relief. Mexican infant mortality (under one year) was three times that of the white. "These conditions of Mexican immigrants in the United States, low living standards on the one hand, and frequent dependency on the other, are naturally the cause of much irritation among self-respecting American working men." It is equally true that they embitter the Mexican against a social order which forces him into such conditions even though it spends hundreds of thousands of dollars for his relief. (The bill of Los Angeles County for Mexican relief in 1925 was \$430,000.)

It is easy to exaggerate the criminal record of the Mexican immigrants. They appear frequently in police court reports. "According to the census of 1910," Prof. Kelsey of University of Pennsylvania reports, "Mexicans easily stood first among all immigrants in the rate of commitment to all penal and reformatory institutions, and also stood first in most of the very serious crimes." But it is not fair to judge the present Mexican population by the records of sixteen years ago when the number was so much smaller and the character of the immigrants so different. In the Imperial Valley it is still assumed that Mexicans are responsible for seventy-five per cent of the crime, though actually on the criminal register only twenty-five per cent of the complaints were against Mexicans. Of the commitments to jails instead of the eighty per cent Mexicans commonly reported, the records showed only thirty-five per cent. Many of the commitments were in

default of bail or for minor offences, infraction of ordinances through ignorance, or were of "floaters" who had been in the county less than six months. It is the Mexican drifter who becomes a criminal, not the resident laborer. Prof. Kelsey wisely remarks concerning this tendency to brand the Mexican with a bad criminal record, "That which we try to explain as due to peculiar individual circumstances in our own social group is explained as a *racial trait* if found elsewhere."

There is no question that the deportation of smuggled Mexican immigrants creates a great deal of personal bitterness among the deported ones and their relatives. Sometimes deportation is used as a pretext for "jumping a contract." An incident is reported near Brownville, Texas, where a cotton grower "quarreled" with his Mexican laborer just before a big cotton harvest, had the man deported and thus deprived him of his promised wages consisting of the cotton crop on ten acres. Large numbers of the contract laborers admitted temporarily for seasonal labor have never returned to Mexico, according to their contract. In general the bootleg Mexican labor is said to be "unreliable, shifting and an embarrassment to both governments." The result of the illegal entry is to induce in the Mexican immigrant a disrespect for all American law. The inevitable result also of the exploitation of Mexican cheap immigrant labor, seasonal or permanent, is on the one hand, "antagonism on the part of Mexican labor toward United States employment control, with protective efforts on their part, resulting in lack of confidence on both sides," and, on the other hand, the "heavy Mexican immigration has caused friction by oversaturation of the local American labor market. Both Mexicans and Americans suffer, the former from long periods of unemployment, except at the peak of seasonal demand, the latter resenting intrusion of all foreign labor that can live more cheaply than themselves."

There seems to be some difference of opinion as to the importance of these conditions of Mexican immigration in relations between the governments. One prominent educator says, "The departments of state of the two countries are more concerned with oil than laborers." An eminent authority on Mexico says that the immigration question could "hardly be called a major issue with the Mexican government." Another says: "Mexico does not seem to care much about her nationals in the United States." And yet it is generally admitted that the Mexican government is making considerable efforts to discourage emigration, insisting that the labor is needed for the development of Mexico. Morones, Secretary of Commerce and Labor in the Calles government, Leon, Secretary of Agriculture, and Trevina, General Secretary of the Crom (Mexican Federation of Labor), have been reported as determined to organize Mexican common laborers so that they will not be exploited when they cross into the United States. Mexican officials near the border have been instructed to refuse to prospective emigrants the special papers demanded by the American consuls before approving their entry into the United States. Mexican consuls on the border are fostering colonization schemes in Mexico for returning emigrants.

There seems also to be a good deal of difference of opinion as to whether Mexico is injured or benefited by the emigration of laborers. One Mexican paper stated that "Mexico is bleeding at every pore." It is reported by an agricultural expert in California: "Prior to the adoption of the head tax law, many portions of Mexico, particularly on the West Coast,

were depleted in labor population, due to the draft on labor from the United States. Mexico will always have an overplus of temporary labor and a shortage of actual permanent labor, due to the primitive standards of life and habits of the Mexican Indian population." President Calles is said to be making great efforts to keep Mexican laborers at home, and the statement is made by the Mexican Consul's office in Los Angeles that Mexico needs its laborers.

It seems, however, to be the general opinion among nearly all whom we have consulted that Mexico can well spare her idle surplus population, and that the importation of contract seasonal labor into the United States should be of real economic advantage to Mexico. A prominent Mexican pastor in Mexico City states that the significance of the immigration question is negligible in the relations between the governments and also that it has little effect on the required labor supply of the country. Nevertheless it is well known that Mexico is a sparsely settled country with vast undeveloped resources, and it appears that the number of Spanish-speaking persons in the United States is nearly one-quarter the total population of Mexico. If this is true, there is reason for the apparent strenuous objection to further emigration by a government of Mexico, now becoming stabilized and devoting itself to national development.

Several of our correspondents urge renewal of permission from the United States Department of Labor for the importation of contract seasonal Mexican labor. Many sections of Texas and California sent delegations to Congress seeking such permission, and the matter was extensively discussed in committee. One comparatively small district in California, in a hearing before the House Committee on Immigration was reported as needing twenty thousand Mexicans for the crop season, with the expectation that they would pass on to other districts for other crops. The Imperial Valley in California uses fifteen thousand Mexicans at the peak of the canteloupe season of two months, and only five thousand during the slack season.

Many secretaries of Chambers of Commerce insist that the Mexican labor is the only salvation for the agricultural interests, and offer interesting suggestions for handling it with some regard to the social needs of the laborers and the opportunity for continuous employment. One says "When there is no Mexican labor, there will be no Imperial Valley." The manager of the agricultural department of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce says: "If we demand the return of the illegal Mexicans in California, if we place Mexico on the quota list, if we persist in charging the Mexican, as at present, what really constitutes a small fortune to him that he may serve us (referring to consular fees and head tax for every member of his family), if he in coming be unionized, California's agriculture is at an end, and with our agriculture go our industry, commerce and prosperity."

But from another Chamber of Commerce secretary comes the admission that "the American employer of cheap labor, as a general thing, hires Mexicans about the same as he hires mule teams." A member of the Congregational Social Service Commission says: "Seasonal labor is always demoralizing. Performed under abnormal conditions, without home, family, or social conveniences and restrictions, it gives a bad impression of American life and the life of the immigrant." Resentment inevitably results from the subjection of one race to such abnormal conditions, both in the

thought of the race so employed, and in the thought of the other race who suffer from labor competition. Many insist that the social consequences and the racial antagonisms must be accepted and mitigated as much as possible, since the "Mexican seems necessary to the agricultural development of the country." But in the hearing of the House Immigration Committee above-mentioned, Representative Box of Texas, referring to the heavy social economic cost of slave labor in the South before the war, and comparing it with the conditions of Mexican labor in the Southwest, said, "The problem is whether the development of agriculture under such circumstances is worth what it costs." Commissioner of Immigration Hull urges the adoption of legislation which will put Mexicans in a class with Europeans as regards the restriction of immigration. He stated in a recent address in New York that the government had done away with the day of cheap labor by cutting down the admission of aliens, and that the present prosperity of American workers is largely due to the present immigration policy. But the agriculturists of Texas and California declare that they *must have cheap labor*, and they are getting it, legally or by the bootleg route, and it is *this* that *they* give as the reason for prosperity.

SECTION II.

Mental Attitude of Mexican Immigrants

Irrespective of the economic value of the Mexican immigrant for the development of the Southwest we need to study his attitudes toward Americans, American ideals, and the United States government.

The testimony on this point is quite conflicting. A good many observers think the Mexican immigrant suspicious of Americans, indifferent to American ideals, hostile to the American government. One writer says: "There are Mexicans who have lived in this country more than fifty years and do not know five words of English." But he adds that "the children are thoroughly Americanized by the third generation." Another writes: "It is evident that the Mexican does not take kindly to the number and strictness of legal regulations in this country. Accustomed to irresponsibility he easily gets into trouble and resents interference." One says: "The Mexican hates prohibition and espionage." "In El Paso there is a skilled Mexican bricklayer who has so far conformed to the customs of American life that he has joined the bricklayers' union, but he has paid \$500 in fines for persistent neglect of union rules." One rather pessimistic writer declares: "After six years' experience among Mexicans in San Diego and Los Angeles and Arizona it is my firm conviction that the Mexicans show less capacity for assimilation than any other race in the United States except the Chinese and Japanese." Another indicates an absolutely different impression: "After long experience with many nationalities I believe that *none* are so open to the influence of American contacts as are the Mexicans." A Mexican reports the attitude of his people as "Toward Americans, respect; toward American ideals, reverence; toward the United States government, suspicion." A recent intensive survey made by the superintendent of the Latin-American missions of the Methodist Church showed that Mexicans generally come to the United States quite prejudiced and fearful. One quoted the statement, "Mexico knows America by its whiskey and divorce; America knows Mexico by its filth and ignorance."

Largely responsible for this mutual misunderstanding is a certain section of the American daily press. A leading daily in Mexico City says: "American *newspapers* are Mexico's worst enemies, and also the worst enemies of the United States government's efforts to establish friendship among the nations of the western hemisphere." The secretary of the Federal Council's Commission on International Justice and Goodwill reported the misleading character of the alleged news about Mexico in the American press and cited several flagrant instances.

A testimony, based on wide experience and sympathy, is that the Mexican immigrant is "a little suspicious toward Americans, with warmest loyalty toward those who win and justify confidence." One reports: "The Mexican at home sees only two classes of Americans, the American exploiter and the American renegade, and forms his opinion of America on this basis. Very many have drawn the conclusion that the Mexican is indifferent if not suspicious or hostile to American ideals, that they are alien to his thought and have no attraction for him. It is generally assumed that he is ignorant and apathetic about our government. On the other hand a prominent Mexican editor reports as a result of extensive personal investigation, that in every group of Mexican laborers with whom he had talked "there was always some one who was bitter against the United States on account of the war of 1847 and seizure of Mexican territory." The Mexican peasant may not be as ignorant as we have supposed concerning the international relations of the United States, even though he may be a common transient laborer.

A very considerable amount of the feeling between Americans and Mexicans in the United States has historical roots, and is not an immediate outgrowth of present economic conditions. American history is often written with a bias. "The Story of Our American People," a school history said to be backed by the American Legion, the Elks, the Daughters of the Revolution and the National Security League, has this sentence, "Once more the Mexicans were childishly defiant, and again our president patiently endured their feeble insolence." Even a missionary text-book issued by one denomination in the Home Mission Council refers to Mexico as a "small and backward land of revolutions, illiteracy and superstitions, efficient in nothing, unstable in everything." The author further speaks of it as "a shrunken, weakened nation," without a word of apology for the American aggression which caused that condition.

On the other hand, the first reports of the first representative in Washington, D. C., from the newly-established Mexican republic, in 1821, warned his country of the territorial ambitions of the Americans. Seward boasted that our territory would some day stretch from the Isthmus of Panama to the Arctic Circle. For many years before the annexation of California from Mexico the Mexican government knew of the efforts of Americans in California to encourage secession of that territory, and feared the Americans only less than the Russians who had threatened from the north. Besides their openly expressed desire to detach California from Mexico, Americans in that territory before 1846, according to the writer in the Encyclopedia Britannica, "had a racial contempt for Mexicans which was arrogantly proclaimed." The Civil War and the European intervention in Mexico showed the folly of Seward's dreams. The people of Mexico did not, however, understand the gradual change of attitude of the American people, and they still hear enough of the talk about "going in and

cleaning up Mexico," to develop a very deep and lasting suspicion of Americans and the American government. Some people in Texas enjoy reporting, as a joke on the Mexicans, the wholesome terror inspired in them by the Texan troops in the war of 1848, and their supposed belief that they could easily lick the United States if it were not for the people of Texas. Few Mexicans have learned that there is an increasing body of Americans who regard the war of 1848 as one of the most disgraceful episodes in American history. Many Mexicans and some Americans know that the Mexican war was fought to extend slave territory in the United States. Only by a happy accident was prevented the extension of slavery into the entire territory taken from Mexico, from the Mississippi to the border of Oregon. A fraternal delegate from Mexico to a gathering in the United States said: "There was a common understanding between the slave owners in the United States and the land owners in Mexico that an international war would make the common people of Mexico forget the issue of the ownership of Mexican lands and make the American people forget the issue of the emancipation of the slave." Can any one wonder in view of this history that there is suspicion and contempt in the relations of Mexicans and Americans?

Another irritating condition in relations between Mexico and the United States, which certainly aggravates suspicion and hatred among Mexican immigrants, is the powerful influence of special interests in the United States to encourage and financially support rebellion against the Mexican government. Deputy Santos of the Mexican Congress recently reported definite proof that the Yaqui uprising on the West Coast of Mexico was fomented and financed by representatives of certain oil interests and of the Knights of Columbus, and that a fund of four million dollars had been raised to overthrow the Calles government and place in power a new group which had agreed to make constitutional changes. There is an active and well-financed Mexican anti-government propaganda bureau in New York City. Their most effective weapon is the spread of distrust and suspicion between Americans and Mexicans.

The bulk of the testimony, whether favorable or unfavorable as to the response of the Mexican immigrants to American contacts, indicates that these people are highly susceptible to social attitudes, very emotional in their reactions to experiences in the United States, but romantically attached to their own country and its customs. Many say the Mexican has very little chance for contacts with the better class Americans or with American ideals. A Chamber of Commerce secretary says "Our cotton field immigrant sees only his Mexican boss, or possibly the boot-legger and the sheriff."

Those who have had the closest acquaintance think the Mexican is naturally very receptive to American ideals, but is immediately repelled by the attitude that he is "only another greaser." As a result his adaptations to American life are often only superficial. He is one of the most adaptable in the matter of food, clothes and the conveniences of American life, when the attainment of them is economically possible. In one district the home teacher reports that two-thirds of the Mexicans are buying their own homes. But this is in Los Angeles, not in the cotton or the sugar beet districts.

It would be easy to expand at length on the isolation and neglect of the Mexican immigrant camps in many places, and the scarcity of

contacts with anything helpful in American life, in spite of much effort on the part of Americanization teachers, charity organizations and mission boards. But the function of this commission is merely to investigate how the Mexican reacts to the contacts he does have, whether he is assimilable and at bottom whether his assimilability is not materially discounted by individual, racial and national attitudes between Americans and Mexicans. The evidence seems conclusive that the Mexican immigrant group gives the impression of being peculiarly unresponsive to American ideals, for the reason that they have almost universally set up a defense mechanism against an unsympathetic American public. In a large majority of cases, experiences tend to prejudice the Mexican against everything American. One said "You want us just as long as we are strong and well and able to do five dollars worth of work for three dollars; when we get sick and can't work it is nothing but kicks." But it is also true that Mexican immigrants keenly appreciate the material advantages for the first time made economically possible to them, and, in a favorable spiritual atmosphere, respond cordially to the best ideals of our American life, contributing out of their own racial ideals a love of beauty and a sense of social fellowship, which helpfully supplement our type of culture.

Careful inquiries over a wide area have indicated only a mere handful of Mexicans who have even taken first papers to be naturalized as American citizens. In the first place there is considerable evidence that most of the Mexican immigrants intend to go back to Mexico, though few of them do permanently unless deported. One correspondent reports that "the Mexican comes across the border for a job without any thought of changing his allegiance."

The Mexican immigrant does not refuse civic burdens while in the United States. Eight Mexican boys went from Chino, California, to the World War, but not one of them considers himself an American citizen. Four hundred Mexicans were on the draft quota of fifteen hundred in one town, though only two of them had taken out first papers. The Mexicans were members of a joint committee for the Fourth of July celebration in that town and this year took all the first prizes for floats in the procession. This does not mean, however, that the Mexican wants to abandon his country and become an American citizen. The practically unanimous testimony is that the Mexican, although he knows little of the meaning of citizenship in his own country, and has had little or no share in the government of his country has no desire to transfer his allegiance to the United States, and secure citizenship rights. "He simply wants to remain a Mexican; he never shifts his loyalties." Any one who has read the rhapsody on Mexico, in commemoration of the anniversary of Mexican independence, which was published recently in the little paper circulating widely among Mexican Evangelicals in the Southwest, need not be surprised that there are practically no Mexican immigrants applying for naturalization in the United States. A good many of the Mexican immigrants look at the matter in a practical way. One said "If they do not treat me right, I go to consul, but if I become American citizen, what I do?" Another said, "What's the use? Papers of naturalization will never change my complexion, and never will get better treatment from the Americans here."

SECTION III.

Influence of Mexican Immigrants in the United States

It is equally important that we should examine the influence of Mexicans in the United States on the general public life and thought of this country, particularly in the Southwest, as we have sought to discover the effect of our cultural life upon the Mexicans. There are in California and along the border a considerable number of Mexicans of the higher class, though the great mass of the immigrants are of the peon class. The higher class are often called Spanish instead of Mexican, and have as a matter of fact a preponderance of Spanish blood. The Mexicans generally are, however, seventy-five per cent Indian blood. A considerable number of the higher class Mexicans are political refugees. In San Antonio houses rented to the "outs" in Mexican politics were occupied by their political enemies when there was a change in the government and the political refugees could go back. Los Angeles is known to be a center where efforts against the Mexican government, whether the old dictatorship of Diaz or the new radicalism of Calles, have been periodically planned and promoted. Only a few months ago a revolutionary army of 176 men was stopped by United States authorities as they were about to cross the border from Southern California. However one may regard this political activity, and it has frequently been very serviceable to the cause of Mexican freedom, it so absorbs the attention of the Mexicans concerned that they have comparatively little influence on the American communities in which they live, and even less upon the Mexican laborers.

There are also many educated Mexicans in business along the border, and in the cities of the Southwest, who have a considerable influence in promoting appreciation of Mexican culture, art and music. They are often cordially welcomed and sought after by Americans. But frequently they are exclusive and contemptuous of American boorishness and materialism. One Mexican frankly says: "We regard you as money makers, who value everything in terms of dollars." There is little evidence that they materially help the situation as between Mexicans generally and the Americans, or that they do anything appreciable for their own nationals, except in a general way to urge loyalty to Mexico and Mexican tradition. From a Mexican consulate in a leading center of Mexican population comes the report that the educated Mexicans keep to themselves and are "deaf to any appeals for aid in bettering the condition of the lower class Mexicans." This group of high class Mexicans has apparently never produced a single "friendly visitor" among the Mexican immigrant community. Even the Mexican college students from Christian colleges seem easily to lose contact with the Mexican laboring classes, although this student group are very effective in promoting better understanding between the two countries. In general the influence of the better class Mexicans in the United States is against assimilation of the Mexican laborers to the communities in which they live, or utterly indifferent to it, concerned mainly with their own personal or national interests, a permanently alien element.

Abundant evidence shows that while the Mexican laborers are, generally, segregated from almost all American contacts, except the labor boss and the charity worker, and likely to remain unassimilated, migratory and dependent, it is yet entirely possible, and comparatively easy, to change all this by a human rather than a purely economic interest in them, and to

develop, certainly in the children of immigrants, a desirable class of American citizens, with advancing standards of living, permanent residence and certain very valuable social characteristics.

It appears that many Mexicans returning to their homes in Mexico give this country a bad name. A missionary superintendent writes "According to the testimony of different consuls many Mexicans have literally shaken the dust of this country from their shoes and have returned to their native land positive in the belief that our ideals of liberty and equality are mere myths. The result of expressing this belief to his fellow countrymen is, of course, self-evident. Yet, these same Mexicans often exaggerate the material opportunities to be found in the United States. They generally come back to the United States themselves, thus greatly stimulating the coming of other immigrants with, however, an initial prejudice against anything in America except the high wages. It will be hard to persuade Americans that this attitude is in fact wholly contrary to the natural frank and friendly spirit of the Mexican, and is the quick emotional response to the heartless way in which the Mexican laborers have been exploited merely as so much available "horse power."

One correspondent thinks the Mexican laborers who have returned to their homes from the United States "do more to raise the standards in Mexico than all the schools and churches." Another says "Laborers who return to Mexico have been largely responsible for the unrest and revolution in that country. They make the Mexican peon dissatisfied with oppression and poor living conditions and make imperative social, political and moral advance in the home land." A missionary in Mexico says: "Every laborer who returns is a herald of the wonders he has seen. They are agitators, forming an element of discontent and criticism in Mexico, and do not stay long. Some, however, have returned from the United States and done an important work in the economic reorganization of Mexican business."

Many seem to think that the returned Mexican immigrant drops back into his traditional tribal life, after having made his money in the United States, that the incident of his money-making adventure has comparatively little permanent effect upon him or his home community, and that it has merely spoiled the American labor market, by creating an artificial supply of cheap labor, which cannot be a permanent or desirable element in the American communities. Even the employers who have utilized this artificial supply are dissatisfied because of the large labor turnover, and because so much money is sent out of the country. This has been one of the important objections to Chinese and Japanese labor on the Pacific Coast, that the money went back to the Orient, instead of being used for local development.

While there are many evidences that a considerable number of Mexican immigrants are adapting themselves to their American environment, as far as they are permitted to form cultural contacts, are building homes, settling into steady habits of industry and developing their own group organizations, yet the general impressions seems to be that they have materially lowered the average living standards and are a terrific burden on their communities. The effect on American life of the presence of Mexican labor camps, such as one described by Dr. McLean in the Survey of Imperial Valley, and such as are "permitted" by American ranchers in the waste corners of their fields, is to distinctly lower the social ideals of

the region. State laws require minimum housing conditions for seasonal laborers, but employers escape responsibility in various ways by "permitting" the Mexican laborers to provide their own shacks. The Mexican Consul in Denver says, concerning the workers in beet fields, "The Mexicans are housed like pigs." Many Eastern visitors, charmed with the beauty and the high cultural standards of Southern California are shocked to discover on the bank of a dry river bed or up some rocky canyon a group of Mexican squatters, with sanitary and other living conditions as primitive as those of a gypsy camp. Community ideals are frequently demoralized by the acceptance of the economic advantage of cheap labor without its obligations. The Relief Commission of Fresno, California, reported: "The presence of Mexican laborers is a continual menace to the health and welfare of the community. Most of them have been brought here by large employers who have made a practice of leaving them on the community when the season of employment is at an end."

When the Mexican immigrant is released from his seasonal labor in the beet fields or the cotton or the orchards, he generally turns cityward. Denver and Detroit as well as Los Angeles have reported that the flocking of Mexicans into the cities during the winter has become a very serious problem. There are so many more Mexicans in the Southwest, and the people of Los Angeles have such a splendid series of welfare and relief organizations, that Los Angeles has come to be a Mecca to the Mexican laborer. "If he is too far from his Mexican home during the seasons of unemployment, and anywhere near Los Angeles, he will drift to the city." San Antonio is likewise a haven for the unemployed Mexican laborer, and a starting point for the fan-like routes of migration all over the United States. A beet sugar company in Michigan reports that they bring four hundred Mexican families from San Antonio in May and return most of them about the middle of November.

One of our correspondents thinks the returned Mexican immigrant tells his relatives at home how easy it is to get things from Americans, and urges them to come over and "get theirs." Another thinks, "Of all the races which come into this country, the Mexican is the most susceptible to pauperization by organized charity. Frequent periods of unemployment encourage dependency until it becomes habitual." A Catholic priest says: "I worked in a community where one man was always handing out all he had to the Mexicans. Well, that was a good way to spoil them. I went around in the community to investigate conditions. They did not need all he was giving them. Two and three out of each family were working and earning enough to keep the families comfortably." A Mexican writes: "In California philanthropic institutions are so numerous and so reachable that the Mexican population finds in such agencies a veritable *mine*. One man said he fared better when he was without work than when he had a job at \$150 a month. Some Mexican men absent themselves from home when a baby is about to come for then the county takes care of the 'widowed' mother. The father returns later." A Mexican woman church member in Los Angeles gave her pastor three dollars in postage stamps which she had gotten from the County Charities in addition to her regular allowance. She sends stamps to several of her relatives, and they easily exchange them for money. Does that sort of charity make for interracial respect, and can it be called scientific, not to say Christian?

It should not be assumed, however, that the Mexican communities are not themselves organizing for self-help. Perhaps they would do much more if they were encouraged instead of patronized. Mexicans have the "Blue Cross," instead of the American Red Cross. There is an active chapter in the small town of Brawley in the Imperial Valley, with four hundred members. It owns two lots, and has raised \$1,400 for a hospital, and distributed \$800 in relief. In such distant points of Mexican migration as Detroit and the Chicago area, there are also organizations of the Blue Cross to help care for the dependent beet workers and other laborers who come into the cities during the winter. A banker in Calexico, California, reports that some of the educated Mexicans are helping in these group organizations for their own people. Among these are the Hidalgo Mutualist Society, also the Alianza Hispano Americana, the Benito Juarez Society, the Latin League, and the Anahuaca, the latter mainly for social purposes. In Chino, California, among a fairly stable population of Mexicans, there are various secret societies, which, while they claim a desire to promote friendship between Americans and Mexicans, yet seem to conserve a racial or national consciousness that tends to work against interracial understanding. They have no place in their program for the co-operation of friendly Americans.

One can hardly avoid the conclusion that the Mexicans in the United States appear to the majority of Americans a peculiarly unassimilable element, purposely avoiding cultural assimilation, and concerned merely for their own economic advantage, though this is probably due to the fact that they are not considered by Americans generally except as an attractive labor supply, and have on the other hand a rather unique idealism toward their native land. Conditions being as they are the Mexicans in the United States probably do furnish a fertile soil, as one missionary superintendent says, "for wet and communist propaganda." Another says they are likely to be easily influenced by agitators. With their racial characteristics they may easily be a tinderbox for unscrupulous politicians or an idealistic leaven in our mechanistic civilization.

SECTION IV

Prejudice toward Mexican Immigrants

Enough has been said in the preceding section to indicate that personal attitudes of Americans toward Mexicans are very often abnormal, influenced pathologically by economic status, by racial and cultural differences and by historic incidents in the relations between the two nations. Your commission has sought to secure definite data on the extent and character of American prejudice against the Mexicans. There is a certain class of community boosters who habitually ignore such social diseases as race prejudice, and emphasize all evidences of interracial co-operation and friendly feeling. This is eminently desirable when it represents actual conditions, but one of our correspondents thinks a good deal of the border talk of Mexican-American friendship is "bunk," in view of the practices of some organizations which speak so much about it.

Analyzing carefully the data from all sources it is evident that the Mexicans in the United States do find a real handicap to their assimilation because of prejudice usually arising according to the reports received, either on account of their frequently uncleanly bodily conditions, or on

account of color. "Those dirty Mexicans" has come to be an accepted description. The common slang is "greasers," although, as one correspondent says "this does not imply the same antipathy as towards Negroes, Chinese and Japanese." The interpretation of Mexican life to the American public through bandit stories on the screen was so marked in Los Angeles that in 1918 a ban was placed upon movie picture films of Mexican life. A typical attitude is shown in a remark by Mrs. Aimee Semple McPherson concerning the adverse testimony of a Mexican chief of police, "They seem to think the word of a Mexican is better than mine." Even most friendly Americans have been offended and inconvenienced by unsanitary conditions of Mexican homes, clothing and persons. It is a fair answer that the Mexicans of the lower classes have little chance for cleanliness, and are glad to have clean homes and clean clothing when they can. A social worker in Chicago reported visiting a hundred Mexican families and found "almost without exception clean and tidy houses." But it should be remembered that there is a strong prejudice also against Japanese, though *they* are unusually scrupulous about bathing and washing their clothes.

Probably one main reason for whatever prejudice there is against Mexicans is their dark color, and another, their low economic status, which inevitably stimulates contempt. There is also a traditional prejudice, the result of difficulties between the two governments.

The amount of prejudice differs greatly. There seems a fair agreement that it is bad in Texas and those who come from Texas bring the infection with them. One correspondent writes, "Those who are really antagonistic and not merely ignorantly indifferent often come from Texas where the spirit is apt to be flavored with 'remember the Alamo'." One town in Southern California has been repeatedly mentioned in reports to the commission as showing prejudice against Mexicans. From some places we have categorical assurance that there is no prejudice nor discrimination against the Mexicans, and also from other correspondents specific incidents of discrimination in those very places. In the border cities there appears to be a strong effort to avoid public discrimination in business relations, but there is a good deal of social discrimination. We have been told there is absolutely no prejudice in El Paso, and also others assure us that race feeling runs high here. In Texas, we are told, the Southern feeling toward the Negro is extended to the Mexican. One person says that the more economically independent are known as "Spanish," and escape prejudice, because an unpleasant connotation has become attached to the word "Mexican." In Colorado it is said the racial issue is acute. It appears to be a question of the "tradition of superiority." A missionary superintendent says that the prejudice often takes the form of exploitation. The Mexican is looked upon as an easy mark. One dealer said the Mexicans "should not be allowed to take a cent out of the community." Another got rid of an old auto for \$800 to a Mexican beet field laborer, taking all his year's savings and said "if it were not for these damn Mexicans we never could sell our junk."

There are, as is well known, many thousands of Spanish-Americans born and living all their lives in New Mexico and Colorado who have never had any relation with Mexico. In Santa Fe there is a good deal of intermarriage between Anglo-Americans and these Spanish-Americans, and the New Mexico legislature is bi-lingual. The New Mexico state constitution

forbids any discrimination against Spanish-speaking pupils in the schools. Yet very few Spanish-Americans, after completing high school, care to risk social ostracism in the state university. It does not appear that they have altogether escaped the touch of prejudice in many other relations to their Anglo-American fellow-citizens. The study text-book on race relations prepared for use by the Y. W. C. A.'s reports concerning twelve Mexican students in a Southwestern university, "The university community, accustomed to see Mexicans live in dirt and squalor around the town has not made the distinction between the social background of the students and that of other Spanish-Americans which it would make as a matter of course between native Americans of different classes." A teacher in Southern California says that many of the Mexican students who have had training as bookkeepers, stenographers, salesmen or clerks are obliged to dig ditches because of the prejudice against Mexicans and the consequent limitation of economic opportunity.

In that most critical test of social assimilation, eating together, there is abundant evidence that the Mexican is no more welcome than the Negro or the Oriental in many eating places. "White trade only" is a conspicuous sign in many places, and some restaurants make it clearly, "No Mexicans." In one place the white ranch hands will not eat at the same boarding house with Mexicans. It is undoubtedly true that evidences of such discrimination are in most cases avoided because Mexicans generally frequent their own eating-places, and because the clean, cultured Mexicans are usually received at the better hotels. But this is not always true. In Texas a Mexican consul was refused service. Many think the discrimination in eating-places, theatres, and public conveyances is merely on account of uncleanly habits of Mexican laborers and their families, rather than for any racial prejudice.

In one town in the Imperial Valley, Mexican *students* are admitted to the high school swimming pool, but when the pool is opened one day a week for the general public Mexicans are excluded. There are several specific instances of discrimination against Mexicans in busses, but an indication that they are treated with uniform courtesy by the conductors on the extensive suburban trolley systems of the Pacific Electric. It has been repeatedly noted that Americans will avoid a vacant seat next to a Mexican in public vehicles, and that the Mexicans usually take the back seats or go in the smoking car. But no one will admit that there is any "Jim Crow" requirement toward Mexicans. Although there is no formal segregation of Mexicans on the railroads, one missionary superintendent speaks of his investigations in the "chili con carne" car. There is abundant evidence of the sensitiveness of Mexicans concerning these conditions, though they are often avoided by a voluntary segregation. Several Mexican girls refused the invitation of an American social worker to go to a soda counter because "some one in the store might move away from us." At a church supper in a town in California where there is said to be *no prejudice* against the Mexicans, ladies changed their seats because of the presence of Mexican pastors. In Texas it is said Mexican Protestants have been asked to leave American churches. It frequently happens that motion picture theatres have one side exclusively for Mexicans, and even educated cultured Mexicans are sometimes roughly ordered to stay on their side. This difficulty is avoided when practicable by separate theatres in the Mexican quarter. Mexicans are also excluded from certain playgrounds in Los Angeles.

How often the prejudice against Mexicans is acquired by children from their parents, and is in them a transfer from their attitude toward another race is shown by several incidents. A seven-year-old boy temporarily resident in an Albuquerque hotel remarked that he went to the movies every day except Sunday, "Because, you know, on Sunday there are so many niggers and Mexicans there." A particularly interesting report from a Mexican girl in California says: "One American lady would not let her child associate with a few of us Mexican girls, for the simple reason that we were foreign. She had nothing on which to base her pride, however, because, after two months of not paying their rent the landlady made them vacate their house. I never could learn to like this particular American." Attitudes of school girls in the Imperial Valley toward social recognition of Mexican girls have been changed over night as a result of consultation with parents, who, apparently have established a definite joint segregation, social and geographical, for Mexicans, Negroes, and Orientals.

The question of prejudice and segregation or "separation," as some prefer to call it, in churches and schools has some slightly different aspects. One correspondent does not think it an evidence of prejudice to require separate tables or even dining rooms for Mexicans. And certainly it is not always an indication of prejudice to have separate churches and schools. But in some cases such segregation is distinctly due to prejudice. In a church in California some one said, referring to the clean, cultured students of a missionary school, "If those greaser girls are coming to attend our church, my girls won't go there." In a New Mexico church there was also considerable objection to attendance at church by Spanish-speaking students from an institution for which that church had a particular responsibility. Mothers object to having their children ride in school busses with Mexican, Negro and Oriental children. Mexicans, Negroes, Chinese and Japanese in some places attend a separate high school, though in most cases they are segregated only through the grammar grades and often not beyond the fifth or sixth. In one place the Mexicans *could* go to the white high school, instead of the Negro high school (there is an unusually large Negro population), but they "do not want to make the fight." In a town in California Mexicans built their own Catholic church because of prejudice against them. Several testify that Catholic churches are *not* free from prejudice, as is often stated, even toward the Mexicans.

Public school teachers are evidently sincere and largely free from prejudice when they explain the "separation" of Mexican students, the "opportunity classes" and rooms and the special Americanization work, as a thoroughly sympathetic effort to meet the educational needs of the Mexican child, frequently "retarded" by the lack of English and by the migratory habits of his parents. No teacher, to our knowledge, regards the Mexican child as mentally inferior, under equal conditions, or finds his dirt and poor clothing any reason why he should not have every educational opportunity. The Mexican Relations Committee in Chicago reports very little prejudice in the schools, and that after a year or two the Mexican children are up to the average in intelligence. This is the testimony generally.

Many Mexican parents resent the segregation of their children in the public schools, but usually in the end admit the sympathetic attitude of the teachers, and the benefit to their children from the special language

training in the schools for foreigners. They feel, however, the advantage of having their children with Americans, at least after the first few grades, and that advantage is generally admitted by all teachers and principals. Frequently, however, the attitude of school boards is much less sympathetic and helpful than that of the teachers. In the beet fields of Colorado there is a growing tendency to segregate the Mexican and the Spanish-American children from the ~~other~~ children, and there is a bitter feeling between the ~~other~~ and Mexicans and Spanish-Americans over this question. Apparently the American-born Spanish-speaking people of this section are no better treated than the Mexicans just from the border. They are particularly sensitive, however, as are the Spanish-Americans of New Mexico, about being classed with Mexicans.

The separate churches for Mexicans are also, as Mexican pastors will freely admit, in the interest of Mexicans, for the older people know little English, and would be almost completely inhibited from religious expression if they were part of the membership of an American church.

Some think that the Mexicans prefer to be by themselves in their social and religious organizations. This is true to a certain extent. They are unwilling to push in where they do not feel welcome and at home. But it is unfair to say, as several have done in reporting on racial segregation, that their failure to join clubs and churches of Americans is "their own fault." They may be clannish and race conscious, but they certainly have some reason to be, as a result of American attitudes. They cannot easily regain the confidence that they are socially welcome. When this devil of race distrust has taken possession of the souls of a people, it "cometh not out but by prayer and fasting."

One recent visitor to Mexico comments on the "high-handed and unimaginative ways" in which even respectable Americans conduct themselves, so that they are "unconsciously continually insulting Mexican feelings." Perhaps one of the most fundamental causes of race prejudice, is, when you think of it, just this "unimaginative way" we Americans have about other people and their customs.

SECTION V.

Mexicans in Relation to Other Non-Anglo-Saxon Groups

An interesting method of studying racial attitudes between Americans and Mexicans is by comparing treatment of the different alien groups in the communities studied. Just as in the Territory of Hawaii there is a popular classification between the "haoles" or whites, and the others, and the Portuguese are associated with the "others," not the "haole" class, despite their European origin, so the grouping of Mexicans with Negroes, Chinese, Japanese and Hindus, "across the tracks" is one of the best indications of public opinion on race relations. Sometimes the answers sent in to your commission do not recognize any prejudice against the Mexican until it comes out in connection with his comparative status in the community, as when Negroes, Mexicans and Orientals attend "the east side high school," and practically only Anglo-Americans "the west side high school." While residential segregation is genuinely the basis of such association in schools, and the residential segregation is conditioned on economic status, yet the ~~other~~ children who may happen to live "across the tracks" would be apt to go to the ~~other~~ high school just the same.

Most of our correspondents feel that there is much less prejudice against the Mexicans than against Orientals or Negroes, and this is probably true, though the statement is subject to important qualifications. One person goes so far as to say that the Mexicans being of Caucasian race do not suffer from prejudice as do the others. Unfortunately neither the premise nor the conclusion is correct. For another writer says "the Mexicans are suffering just like the Orientals and Negroes under the inborn prejudice of the Nordic which keeps him from seeing good in any other race." In Detroit the Negroes are preferred to the Mexicans as neighbors. In the public schools generally the intellectual superiority of the Chinese and Japanese pupils as compared with the Mexican is recognized. Some say the Japanese and Chinese are in much higher favor, while others seem to imply that the prejudice against Orientals, "based on fundamental racial differences," is not comparable with that against the Mexicans, which is "almost altogether a personal matter," "a plain question of cleanliness." The Fresno *Republican* had this item: "There are certain respects in which the Mexican presents a less serious *race* problem than any other form of imported servile labor. Temporarily Orientals are better. Japanese, Chinese and Hindus are clean, intelligent and enterprisingly able to take care of themselves. Mexican peons are dirty, diseased, stupid and helpless. If imported then we must recognize that we are bringing in the most helpless people on earth."

One person says "the Mexican is disliked because he is lazy and dependent and easily pauperized; he is not as violently disliked as the Negro socially." This correspondent thinks the prejudice against Mexicans could be easily overcome if they could reach higher living standards. From Mexican sources comes this clear and frank statement: "The Americans prefer Mexicans on account of their submissiveness, and because, unlike the Japanese, they do not rise in economic status, offer no material competition in the more desirable occupations, nor do they compete as do the Chinese in certain forms of petty business."

One of the most embarrassing moments in the examination before the House Committee on Immigration of a California petitioner for Mexican seasonal labor was when the following dialogue took place:

"Q. Can the Japanese and Chinese do the specified labor? A. Yes.

"Q. And as a matter of fact they are more law-abiding than the Mexicans, aren't they? A. Yes.

"Q. You say that the Japanese are inclined to become permanent residents and home owners and that is what you want. Why is it then that they are not satisfactory? Why are they not as desirable as Mexicans?"

The advocates of free Mexican immigration really expected to strengthen their case by this statement: "The Mexican is not aggressive. He does not take the Chinese or the Japanese attitude. He is a fellow easy to handle." Representative Free of California said: "The Japanese does not want to work for anybody else. In that he differs from the Mexican." The chairman of the House Committee summed up the matter as follows: "Two years ago California came before this committee and stated herself in opposition to Chinese and Japanese immigration and in favor of Chinese and Japanese exclusion; stated that they wanted to develop a great big white state in California, a white man's country; and now you come before us and want unlimited Mexican immigration. I cannot see the consistency." "Let us be entirely frank about this matter. What you want

is a class of labor that will be sufficiently low type that they will not have the ambition or make any effort to become owners of any of your land." "The Mexican does not save money and has no ambition to own any land. He is a gambler and he is always broke." "I cannot see the difference between Mexicans and Japanese and Chinese, except that the Japanese and Chinese are infinitely better."

Another group of laborers with whom the Mexicans are compared are the Russians in the beet fields of Colorado. Like the Japanese they will not stay cheap and dependent. The superintendent of Presbyterian work for Mexicans and Spanish-speaking peoples in Colorado says: "In the northeastern section of the state a great many Russian Germans have worked for years in the beet fields. Many of these now own land, however, and, as hand laborers, are being supplanted by Mexicans. As one farmer puts it, 'About two years after one of these Russians arrives in the beet fields he tells the farmer to 'go to hell' and gets himself a farm.'"

Two of our correspondents make very interesting comparisons of the public attitude toward Mexicans, Orientals and Negroes. One says: "The greatest prejudice is against Mexicans, a sharp prejudice and distrust, next in order, the Japanese, on account of economic jealousy, toward the Chinese merely indifference and toward Negroes simple separation." Another says, "Prejudice against the Japanese is prompted by jealousy, against the Negroes by hatred, against the Mexicans it is tempered by pity." Several put the Mexicans next after Negroes as objects of prejudice, then Chinese, and Japanese most favorably regarded of all. Evidently Professor Bogardus' self-examination tests for race prejudice have been in the mind of several who have submitted answers.

Still another writes that the prejudice against Mexicans is less than against Japanese, but more than against Negroes and Chinese. "It is easily explained by economic conditions and our race relationships. Japan, in the eyes of California, is a formidable enemy. Mexico is not so regarded. Also the thrift, ability and organizing capacity of the Japanese has rendered them formidable economic rivals, whereas the childish, happy-go-lucky Mexican is easily subjugated and kept in the rear."

It is interesting to be told that "among school children the Japanese and Chinese are accepted more readily; among adults there is less antagonism toward the Mexican than toward the yellow and the black races": which practically bears out the diagnosis given above, that the prejudice springs from the fear of national rivalry or economic competition. This agrees with another statement that people "look down on the Mexicans but do not fear them as they do the Japanese and Chinese."

But other writers think that the prejudice is against a brown skin, and that the Mexicans are classed with the Negroes because of color and the lighter Japanese are more respected. But "the Mexican is less obtrusive than the Negro and the Japanese." and there is a "much more cordial attitude toward the Mexican," the objection being "largely personal and social rather than racial." The well-dressed Mexican encounters no prejudice, it is said. The character of the prejudice is entirely different to that toward the Oriental, who is admittedly more intelligent. The prejudice against Mexicans is certainly growing, but many think it is not a matter of "racial antipathy," as in other cases.

One missionary among the Mexicans thinks the difference in immigration restrictions, as compared with Orientals, indicates much less prejudice.

This view, however, does not take into consideration the historic development of such racial prejudices as a result of changing economic condition. We are evidently facing an interracial situation likely to become more and more serious. The *favorable* reports on public attitudes toward Mexicans are really the most serious indications of danger. The same cycle of public feeling toward an alien group, considered as a labor supply rather than as an assimilable element in the population, is almost certain to occur in the case of Mexicans as in the case of Chinese, Japanese and Filipinos, successively, in the territory of Hawaii and on the Pacific Coast. No student of social history can mistake the successive phases of this cycle, as they have followed each other in relations with these alien labor groups; first eager welcome to a cheap docile labor supply; second, mild contempt for a segregated racial group which will accept work refused by the members of the dominant group; third, active bitterness against any who are able to escape from this economic status and threaten that of the dominant group; fourth, organized and determined propaganda, based on supposed racial antipathies and national rivalries, to prevent equal economic opportunity to the alien group. The alien group tends to self-segregation as a means of defense. It is kept alien because thereby more easily dominated. It is tolerated while passive and non-competitive, frequently forced into parasitic occupations, and tends to become, in its local segregated groups, a series of *toxic centres* in the body of American life. *There is no indication that the development of public feeling in the United States toward the Mexicans will follow any different course.*

It would be easier to deal with interracial problems if they were as simple as Lothrop Stoddard would have us think, according to his book, "The Rising Tide of Color against White Domination." In the first place, as Forster says in "A Passage to India," the word "*white*" has no relation to color when it is a question of race conflicts, and, second, there is little evidence of *unity* among the so-called colored races.

Mexicans, Negroes, Chinese, Japanese, Hindus and Filipinos in the Southwest are frequently forced into close association in their work and their residence. Your commission has sought to discover the *interrelations* of these alien labor groups, common victims of prejudice from Anglo-Americans, so that, perhaps, some suggestion might emerge as to methods of interracial co-operation among these groups *in their own defense*, or some encouragement to those in the Anglo-American group who believe that interracial brotherhood is a "realizable ideal."

How do the Mexicans feel toward Negroes and Orientals, and is there any joint effort to improve the economic and cultural position of these groups? We know that the Chinese in South Africa made common cause with the East Indians under Ghandi in the fight for economic opportunity, and helped materially in securing the victory. It is either devilish cunning which has prompted the leaders in the Russian government to enlist all the exploited countries of Asia in resistance to western imperialism,—or else genuine, honest human sympathy. Are the handicapped groups in the Southwest helping each other? Some of us feel it would be easier to help all of them to justice and friendliness if they were standing together and were loyal each group to the interests of the other. Too often, however, the worst exploiters of these groups are members of their own race, or members of one exploited race are used to more efficiently exploit workers of another race.

Reports which have come to us indicate that Mexicans are frequently employed in large numbers by Japanese, and that they prefer Japanese employers as they receive better treatment from them. Japanese have been accused of exploiting the Mexicans, but evidently this is not a common feeling. Japanese stores and pool halls are frequent in Mexican communities. The relations between proprietor and customers are on a purely business basis, but apparently the Mexicans receive fair treatment. Japanese and Chinese are much more likely than Americans to learn Spanish for business purposes. In Pasadena there is a Negro lawyer who does a large and not always reputable business for Mexicans. Often across the border the Mexicans prefer to go to Japanese doctors and dentists, as they are treated so much better than by the high-caste professional men of their own race. Many reports have come of intermarriage between Mexican women of the lower class and Chinese or Japanese men, with statements that the Mexican women find their Oriental husbands much kinder than the ordinary Mexican laboring man. There are also reports of intermarriage between Hindus and Mexicans and between Negroes and Mexicans. In the face of these concrete instances of rather close relations between Mexicans and other non-Anglo-Saxon groups in the Southwest, it is perplexing to have every one of the Mexicans who have reported to the commission state positively that there are no relations with the other races.

There is much disagreement as to the extent of contact between Negroes, Mexicans and Orientals. One writer says the Mexicans are more inclined to mingle with the Negroes than with Orientals. Another says that Orientals and Mexicans are friendly, but that Negroes and Mexicans are constantly at variance. One report says that while the Negroes and Mexicans mingle freely the Negro regards himself on a higher social level than the Mexican. But the Mexican does not agree to that assumption. One Mexican woman stated: "Mexicans do not like to live with Negroes. I'm going to move. I do not want to send my children to a colored school. It's not that we are superior but we are different." That statement has a familiar sound on the Pacific Coast, used by Americans concerning the Japanese. It is also reported by a prominent Mexican that the Mexicans consider Orientals as inferior, and object to being classed with them. Japanese have also objected seriously to being classed with Mexicans and Negroes, and there are certain Americans who are willing to encourage these inter-group prejudices for their own advantage. Efforts of Americans to prevent interracial sympathy and solidarity frequently spring from a desire to keep each racial group weak. When Mexicans themselves report that their nationals have no contacts with Orientals and Negroes, have nothing in common and do not seek the company of these other groups, one wonders whether they realize the resultant weakness of their group in relation to the dominant American group.

The Filipinos are reported to associate freely with Mexicans but to feel their own superiority. Negroes are reported by one correspondent as having a sense of superiority to the Mexicans, as *foreigners*, they themselves being "all American." One correspondent says that Orientals and Negroes "usually adopt a patronizing attitude toward the Mexicans." The Mexicans reciprocate by "looking down upon the Chinese and objecting to intermarriage with Negroes." Another writer says "each of the non-Anglo-Saxon group feels superior except the Negro," and these groups

"are ordinarily antagonistic to each other except as they have a common antagonistic feeling toward Americans."

It is reported that the Chinese Consul is frequently a friendly adviser and a helpful labor bureau for both Mexicans and Negroes, and that Chinese and Mexicans get along well together. But across the border on the West Coast of Mexico the people are very bitter against the Chinese who have monopolized most of the retail trade.

One thing is apparently certain that certain classes at least, in all these non-Anglo-Saxon groups live and work together with a fair degree of harmony, have inevitably many contacts, though ordinarily not of a social nature, and realize in a vague way that they have something in common, even though they resent the alliances into which they seem to be forced. A hopeful sign is that the school children of all these groups get on very well together, and that two missionaries among the Mexicans in the United States report fine co-operation between Mexican churches and Negro churches. There is a girls' club in the Imperial Valley with two Mexican, four Japanese and four American girls. The Y. W. C. A. is active in rural work in the San Joaquin and Imperial Valleys of California, and such interracial clubs are a characteristic of its program. It is doubtful, however, whether the adult Mexicans, Orientals and Negroes will develop any great amount of inter-group sympathy and co-operation, and they will be, for that reason, more easily discriminated against. But their children, being born Americans, will gradually create an all-American solidarity which the Anglo-American children will not be able or perhaps willing to resist.

SECTION VI.

Group Attitudes of Employers, Labor Unions, Mexican Consuls and Mexican laborers.

Your commission thought it desirable to bring together a considerable volume of testimony concerning relations between Americans and Mexicans from four groups especially concerned on account of economic interests. In considering the attitudes of employers it is desirable first to report concerning railroads and large industrial corporations which are employing considerable numbers of Mexicans, and have given more attention to the study of their labor problems than most agriculturists, even when farming extensive areas. It is suggestive to learn that the railroads and steel mills and sugar companies find their chief problem in the transient and shiftless character of Mexican labor, while the average rancher thinks he is better off with abundant *seasonal* labor, for which he has no responsibility after the peak of the labor demand. The Santa Fe, the Denver and Rio Grande, the Great Northern, the Northern Pacific, the Southern Pacific, and, east of the Mississippi, the Pennsylvania, report many Mexicans, mostly as track laborers, and on the whole satisfactory, though improvident. But almost invariably the reports speak of the large labor turnover, and some report that the few Mexican laborers who are in better positions are the ones who are married, permanent, with their own homes.

The Great Western Sugar Company of Colorado has a welfare director and a fine program of assistance to the Mexican beet sugar workers in building their own homes and finding employment between seasons. Its house organ is full of exhortation and suggestion to the farmers about

caring for their Mexican laborers and encouraging them to remain during the winter. The Great Western has several special agents speaking Spanish whose business it is to advise and assist the Mexican laborers. It is probable that many other large industrial organizations have similar welfare work. The Columbia Sugar Company in Michigan also has an excellent housing program and welfare work for its Mexican laborers.

In Detroit the Ford plant employs thousands of Mexicans at good wages, but they are in positions where no English is required, and which have a large element of drudgery and industrial hazard. Mexicans are spoken of in the reports of several large organizations as more "docile" or "tractable" than laborers of other nationalities. Rarely do they have a fair chance in promotions. The large industrial organizations seem on the whole to take a much sounder economic position with reference to Mexican labor than do the individual employers, but the latter often have a larger *human contact*, and a more sympathetic viewpoint.

The manager of the agricultural department of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, in an address before the California Conference on Social Work last May, presented most clearly from the standpoint of enlightened self-interest the position of the ranchers and fruit-growers of the state: "Our attitude to labor in California has always been one of indifference, day, hour and piece labor, without preparation for or consideration of the worker off the job. This applies to farm and industrial labor. The smaller the farm the greater the necessity of casual labor, yet the less possible of preparation to receive it." "We cannot get along without the Mexican laborer. To get him we must offer just inducements and guarantee him security. To keep him we must foster him and cease to abuse him. To make the best use of him we must devise some means to make his service possible to agriculture and industry *when needed, and be responsible* for him until his term of employment is ended, then *return him to his home*, a living advertisement to others, *that the supply may not fail us.*" "Some organization, governmental or co-operative, must be vested with the full responsibility of carrying out each step, sufficiently powerful and substantial to contract the Mexican laborer, bring him into California, see that his services are available to and used by agriculture and industry, that his physical and spiritual well being are taken care of, and on the completion of his term of contract deliver him back to the district from which he was taken, materially better off." In effect, this proposed plan is the same as the plan for recruiting labor from northern Rhodesia for the mines of the Rand, and the "black-birding" system in the South Seas. In both these cases this labor recruiting is under strict government supervision with careful protection of the interests of the contract laborers, as it was in Hawaii before annexation. But it is a question whether the contract labor system, even under the most favorable auspices, would be acceptable to the enlightened conscience of most of our American communities.

Dr. McCombs in his book, "From over the Border," gives these testimonies from large industrial organizations as to the Mexican laborer. First from a section boss, thirty years with the Santa Fe: "The Mexicans are the best laborers on earth. . . . Give me the Mexican and I will do the job. You cannot drive them, but use firm kindness and they are all right—at least until they get drunk." The Chief Engineer of the Santa Fe system says: "Ninety per cent of all our track men from the Coast to Chicago are Mexicans. The Mexican cannot be driven like the Negro, but anyone

who knows how to manage the Mexican can get more work out of them than any other class. They must be kept contented. They will not stay until they get their families from Mexico." The head of the greatest rose nursery on the Pacific Coast says: "I employ Mexicans altogether. The Mexican can be made to be not only contented but in love with his work. I find that other leading heads of industry requiring not only unskilled labor but particular and responsible operations are coming to our conclusion that Providence is turning our way now. the best labor, all considered, to be found."

Rev. C. E. Crawford, a missionary among the Mexicans, cites three instances of the feeling of large organizations: "(1) The president of a ten million dollar orange company is an enthusiastic friend of the Mexicans. Outside of his humanitarian interest in bettering their condition he sees a business advantage in our social work in its tendency to reduce labor turnover. (2) The company operating a large cement plant is willing to have anything done in a social or religious way to make their employees happy and contented, so long as it does not cost any money. But they are willing to provide good housing and sanitary conditions. (3) A sixteen million dollar land development company look at it as a problem in hygiene, reduced labor turnover and the prevention of thieving. They are greatly interested in the welfare of their labor, providing good homes, a nice school for the Mexican children and a community house."

One does not expect carefully thought out views on all phases of the Mexican labor problem from the ordinary rancher who may employ a few hundred Mexicans for a part of the year. But the agriculturists of California and Texas are faced with certain unavoidable facts which are reiterated in the reports. They cannot get American laborers, who are willing or able to do the type of work required; they must have seasonal labor or the harvesting of certain fruit and other crops will be impossible, and they face ruin; the Mexican is the only available source of labor to do this particular type of exhausting, monotonous work.

Some missionary superintendents and educated Mexicans appear to have accepted these economic facts and try to make the best of a situation in which one group must remain indefinitely a migrant, servile class, "hewers of wood and drawers of water," in order that the country may be developed. Many observers, however, are dissatisfied with such a system and note anti-social attitudes which result from such conditions. They report "there is no sympathy between employer and worker. The employer does not see that the Mexican cannot be driven to get the best." The employer is "concerned only with labor and wage; there is no understanding and interest." In one of the valleys of California the ranchers "regard the Mexican laborer as a necessary evil, they are unwilling to provide fair camping sites and receive the Mexican children in schools." Another rather cynically reports that the American employers want "Mexican labor for exploitation, and try to convince themselves they are missionary in their purpose." Another says the employer "likes to have a *fluid* labor supply." Several favor the Mexican because he is "submissive." One correspondent says: "They want laborers of low standards, nominal wage, satisfied with a monotonous grind." An employer says: "We have them here and public opinion forces us to do our duty by them, but they'll never amount to much." A pastor in El Paso sums up the situation fairly when he reports

"they want Mexican labor because it is cheaper, more submissive; there is less trouble, less responsibility for social conditions."

But the employer has something to say for himself. He "likes the Mexican labor, but feels that the Mexican does not reciprocate in loyalty and faithfulness." Often the Mexican seems to be superficial and careless in the industries," "not satisfactory except in menial work under a foreman." There are many reports that the employers co-operate in educational programs for Mexican laborers. They are "beginning to realize the advantage in permanency and are encouraging home building." Payment by the box instead of by the day in gathering fruit encourages industry. There seems little doubt that there is a growing conviction of responsibility on the part of the employers and a willingness to face it. How much their philanthropic spirit will depend upon the continued low economic status of the Mexican laborer is by no means certain.

American labor unions are almost unanimous in opposing Mexican immigration because of the lower standard of living. In 1918 the Miners' Union fought unsuccessfully for the inclusion of Mexico under the quota law. Their representatives complained at the Detroit annual meeting of the A. F. of L. that Mexicans had taken the place of many union miners.

Some effort has been made to organize the skilled Mexican laborers along the border into separate unions or to bring them into the American unions. The effort has not been specially successful, not particularly because of prejudice, but because the Mexican laborers do not readily adjust themselves to the methods of the American unions. There is practically no attempt to unionize the common Mexican labor. Twenty-five per cent of skilled Mexican labor has been unionized, but they make poor union men. Where a union is exclusively Mexican like the chauffeurs, they are quite successful, though there is a tendency in such unions for one man to become a dictator.

American labor leaders have reported an agreement with Mexican labor leaders to seek Mexican government action to restrain as far as possible the immigration of Mexicans into the United States. In general, there has been a very cordial feeling between the labor leaders of Mexico and those of the United States. Samuel Gompers was an early messenger of friendship; his successor and the members of the Executive Committee of the Federation have followed his policy and sought to develop Pan-American understanding and good will through a Pan-American Federation of Labor. But a representative of the Miners' Union recently charged that the Mexican Federation of Labor was "red from top to toe," and was a tool of the Mexican government, which used the federation in furtherance of its economic, industrial and religious policies. The action of the Detroit meeting, directing an inquiry by the Executive Committee of the A. F. of L. into the relation of the Mexican Federation to the Mexican government is likely to break down much of the friendly feeling between Americans and Mexicans resulting from the policy of Gompers and Green, and to aggravate prejudice against Mexican laborers in the United States.

In marked contrast with the indifference of most high-class Mexicans concerning their nationals in the United States is the fine spirit shown by the Mexican consuls. If they represent the spirit of the new leaders of Mexico it means an end of the old aristocratic rule and the beginning of a real democracy in which the peon is to have a chance. Of course the Mexican consul does not favor direct Americanization work among his nation-

als; he must serve the interests of Mexico, as well as of the Mexican in the United States. He encourages return to Mexico, and some consuls have expressed the feeling that, on account of long periods of unemployment here, the laborer is better off in Mexico. But he generally co-operates cordially with all who are seeking to help the Mexican and with all who will deal fairly by him as employers. The very heavy obligations on the consuls for relief of their nationals, due to the shirking of responsibility by those who have used seasonal labor, is the burden of a great deal of correspondence between the consulate and the Mexican government. Reports of unfair treatment probably also bulk large. But, nevertheless, there is a uniform courtesy and a co-operative spirit in relations with Americans that indicates the possibilities of international friendliness. Only three correspondents have suggested that the Mexican consul was indifferent or unfriendly. Some, like the consul at Los Angeles, give considerable time to public work for the development of understanding and good will. The work done in Southern California by Rev. K. S. Beam for better international understanding finds some of its warmest support from the Latin-American officials in the city. The consul at Laredo was most helpful to the members of the Home Missions Council survey party. The consuls promote an educational program among their own nationals as well as working for good understanding with Americans. They are admired and respected by the Mexican laborers who "turn out to a man when the consul comes to address them." The consuls are often frank in saying that their people are not fairly treated and not enough is done to help them in adjustment to the new situations. They favor curbing immigration in order to limit the problem of caring for and protecting the Mexican immigrant, and insist that American employers must give ample guarantees or else the Mexican government will be compelled for their own protection to restrict the emigration of laborers. But they do urge upon their people respect for American laws and serve most effectively in adjustment and understanding between the Mexican laborer and the Americans. A typical illustration of this activity is that given by one correspondent: "The Mexican consul has recently made a trip here. He spoke urging the people to obey the laws of the United States and getting them to pledge allegiance. At the same time much was made of loyalty to Mexico, which seemed to meet with ready response. Through special classes organized under a worker from Mexico, they are teaching the Spanish language and Mexican history with the idea of keeping the people loyal to the Mexican government." In Texas the Mexican consuls, to aid in their heavy task of adjusting labor disputes and securing the observance of contracts, have organized a special Mexican society known as La Comission Honorifica.

Many of our correspondents think it useless to ask what the Mexican laborer thinks of the economic situation in which he is involved and its social implications. It is easy to suppose he is like "an infant crying in the night, that knows no language but a cry." Some say he is "stolid," "careless," "indifferent," "looking for easy work," others say, "his only problem is to eat," that "his main thought is the pay check and the week end," he is "looking out for his own interests merely." He is "satisfied with food, shelter, few clothes and recreation, liquor and gambling," "not intelligent enough to know there is a problem."

Others say he "appreciates his opportunities for better living conditions, is contented and happy," "though often seeming to be a fatalist." While

"mainly concerned for a living he responds well to efforts for schooling for his children"; he is "concerned about better wages, better living conditions, better treatment by employers." He "resents exploitation, but in the main is friendly." When he is not, it is because, as one Mexican reports, "he knows they think he is no good and reciprocates."

Others, who seem to have looked deeper into the mind of the Mexican laborer, cite the fact that laborers "often refuse employment in a cotton camp unless there is a school open for their children," they report the Mexican laborer as saying his "only real grievance is lack of steady work in one community so that he can buy a home." One Mexican correspondent works out quite full suggestions for stabilizing the Mexican labor, and bridging over the interval between the peak demands of the agriculturists by providing other types of employment in the same locality. Another correspondent writes: "The Mexican wants permanent work, is not given a chance, is always fooled with unkept promises. He works faithfully and when the season is over is told to go like an old horse no longer useful." In very many cases his impressions are formed on the basis of broken contracts. One correspondent says, "It would seem that the race problem for the state of Texas centers in the making and keeping of fair contracts." The Mexican laborer "wonders at the difference of attitude of employers in the United States and Mexico. When he realizes the employer assumes no responsibility except during working hours, he falls an easy prey to agitators." He comes to believe that his employer "regards him merely as a thing, a tool for agriculture."

A fair-minded judgment seems to be that, "although there is a large per cent of shiftlessness and unreliability and some agitation, yet on the average the Mexican is giving more than he is getting, and responds to encouragement, especially when he has his family." "His desire to better himself is a real foundation for good citizenship." "He is willing to do his part in interracial co-operation." He "endures the situation in the hope of ultimate economic and social betterment for himself and his family. One of the best presentations of the viewpoint of the Mexican laborer is given in Rev. C. L. Thomson's "story of Jose" in his paper before the California Conference on Social Work on "The Future of Mexican Immigration."

A speaker at the conference on social work in Toledo recently stated that the Mexican laborer had been crossing the border for work during the harvest season ever since Santa Ana was driven out of Texas. He has come mainly for a seasonal job, and the number of such migratory laborers has been largely influenced by political and economic conditions in Mexico. Apparently, a large proportion do not regard themselves as immigrants to the United States any more than a sailor who signs up for a long cruise away from his native land. The Mexican immigrant is undoubtedly interested in the establishment of stable conditions in Mexico, when, he imagines, his native country would be a much more desirable place than the United States.

Any proper consideration of emotional attitudes of even the most ignorant Mexican laborers toward their American employers and their American environment must start with the admission that they *do* think and think *deeply* about personal relations. Any one who imagines they are "silent, and sullen clods, untroubled by a spark," will make little progress toward interracial good will.

SECTION VII.

Americans in Mexico as a Factor in International and Interracial Relations

A current estimate of the amount of American investments in Mexico is over two billion dollars. Just recently the premier of Canada announced that investments of United States capital in that country amounted to over two and a half billions. The Canadians are not greatly disturbed about the matter, but Mexico feels keenly the exploitation of her natural resources by foreign capital. Prof. Cleland in the Mexican Year Book, 1922, reported that ninety-five per cent of the oil riches of Mexico are in the hands of foreign investors. Statistics given out several years ago reported between eighty-five per cent and ninety per cent of the industries, transportation, mining, oil and timber being developed in Mexico were under the control of foreign capital.

It is well known that Americans own large acreage in Mexico. Mr. Hearst procured from the Diaz government some seven and one-half million acres at two and one-fourth cents per acre. Many other Americans during the thirty years of Diaz dictatorship secured generous concessions for mines, land and oil territory for small sums of money "judicially placed" as one correspondent puts it. Another reports the purchase of "an immense tract of land at three acres for a dollar." A ranch of 135,000 acres, some of the finest farming land in the world, was purchased at \$1.25 per acre. One correspondent writes of a friend planning to secure a large tract in Mexico on long lease for nothing except political graft. One American is reported by a missionary superintendent, as employing six thousand Mexicans on his property in Mexico. A prominent trustee of a great Christian organization boasted of the low price at which he had secured a vast tract of Mexican acres. In many cases these great holdings enable the American owner to enjoy a medieval feudal lordship with a private army which may be used to drive off bandits, or too inquisitive government tax collectors. Similar cases might be indefinitely multiplied. Your commission is concerned only with the influence on international and interracial relations of such large holdings by Americans and of the manner in which these large interests are managed. Several of those who have submitted data, among them educated Mexicans, think these conditions do not materially affect relations between Mexicans and Americans in the Southwest. There is no dispute about their significance in relations between the two governments, and it seems inevitable that even the Mexican seasonal laborers should know and sympathize with the attitude of their government. We have probably underestimated the intelligence of Mexican laborers concerning these matters of international controversy.

There is a great deal to be said on behalf of the American investor in Mexico. Almost without exception he has paid much better wages than could elsewhere be secured, has treated workmen justly, often providing good housing, schools, hospitals, recreation facilities and protection from bandits. Many American investors have, of course, been mainly concerned about their own profits, which were largely sent out of the country. But a considerable number of enterprises, like the Southern Pacific Railroad of Mexico, and the Los Mochis Sugar Refinery, have been specifically mentioned as contributing very largely to the economic development of the country. Any fair-minded visitor to Mexico must admit that thousands of American civil and mining engineers, ranch managers and business

agents have been sincere and effective friends of Mexico's development and the economic progress of Mexican laborers. An educated Mexican mentions that Mr. Doheny has used some of his oil profits from Mexico to establish a chair of Mexican history in Occidental College, and that others who have made money in Mexico are generously helping Mexican students in the United States. A prominent Mexican religious worker says: "Reports that picture the American in Mexico as conscienceless and merciless are bunk," the result of pernicious propaganda. Another writer says: "It seems to be a popular indoor sport to bait American corporations in Mexico." It appears to be "good politics" in Mexico to accuse Americans of robbing Mexico of her resources, just as it has been good politics in the United States to spread alarmist stories about the Japanese in California and across the Pacific.

Whatever may be said for the service to Mexico resulting from the investment of foreign capital, there can be no question of a widespread and deep resentment on the part of Mexicans. Perhaps, as one reporter says, there would be no development except for foreign capital, and, as another says, the exploitation by the American commercial gambler is matched by the extortion of the greedy Mexican official, but it is certain that there is a general unfriendly attitude toward the American interests in Mexico. A prominent recent visitor to Mexico who had exceptional opportunities to study the situation writes: "Mexico is like a small boy who has waked up to find his older neighbors have taken all his patrimony from him in exchange for glass marbles." The Monroe Doctrine means, in the opinion of one correspondent, saying to European powers: "Hands off. We will attend to the exploitation of Mexico's resources ourselves." Another says: "The American in Mexico is more of a problem than the Mexican in the United States," on account of his greed, sharp practices and personal bearing." Two Americans in Mexico frankly told a member of the Congregational Social Service Commission's party that they were "scavengers," like all other Americans, getting all they could out of Mexico.

If one could total all the wealth that has been taken out of Mexico and carried away to enrich foreign lands, from the days of Cortez to the sailing of the last oil tanker from Tampico, the result would be so stupendous that all the efforts of the Mexican government to conserve what is left would seem to be but mild gestures of protest. It is not our legitimate trade with Mexico, the million dollars worth of goods every day which we export to Mexico, which robs Mexico. It is the removal from the country of those enormous profits, which, even if they are legitimate, ought to be reinvested in building up the country. Our correspondents have been assured by President Calles himself that Mexico desired foreign capital. All they asked was that capital should obey the rules, and that Americans should forego their assumed privilege of calling upon their government when things did not go to their liking. Practical extraterritoriality has been unpalatable to Mexico as it is to China.

There seems to be abundant evidence that in the past Americans in Mexico have actively supported revolutionary movements with money and influence. Just recently a Mexican deputy said a fund of four million dollars had been provided by Americans to overthrow the present government. United States government officials in Mexico have been deeply interested in making profits out of Mexico. One American consul complained that

certain threatened action of Mexican officials would deprive him of land worth half a million dollars. But he was not worrying, since he had the backing of the U. S. State Department. Prominent American visitors to Mexico recently have declared that we should have "an ambassador in Mexico City who is something more than a mere representative of financial interests." It is pretty evident, as one correspondent says that "the exploitation of Mexican resources has been accompanied by steady interference with Mexican politics in the interest of the party likely to favor American interests . . . In the United States an effort has been made to use the State Department to further these interests, so that President Wilson felt it necessary to say: 'I have constantly to remind myself that I am president of the whole American people, not simply of that section which have investments in Mexico.'"

What ever we may think of the justification for this constant appeal of special interests that the United States should "clean up Mexico," one could hardly question its effect on the attitude of the Mexican when he comes across to work in the United States. The effort to establish a cordial community spirit, including every element of the population, which spirit is certainly an essential to any normal community life, meets a terrific handicap at the start when an alien element comes in embittered and suspicious, as the Mexicans have a right to be. Your commission does not interpret the purpose of this conference in the narrow terms of church extension among Mexicans in the United States. We feel the goal in every case is a spiritually homogeneous community, not missions for Mexicans but sympathetic and co-operative living with Mexicans in the United States. Before this is attained we must discover and remove the "roots of bitterness" between the two people.

It is not merely the American investor in Mexico whose activities tend to develop strain between the two countries and suspicion and dislike toward Americans on the part of the Mexican immigrants. The American tourist is also responsible to a large extent. Even groups of clergymen from the United States, one correspondent reports, are seen "stalking around amid the kneeling worshipers in the cathedrals making derogatory remarks about their superstitions and acting as superior beings." An apparently high class American approached the cashier in the best hotel in Mexico City, and said offering American gold for exchange: "Here, give me some monkey money. Can't you understand? Give me some Mex." A rich but vulgar American disgraced his country by writing in the official guest book at President Obregon's inauguration that he had especially enjoyed the fine liquor and freedom as to its use.

It is on the border between two countries, particularly in the border towns of Tia Juana and Mexicali and to a lesser extent in Juarez, Laredo and Nogales, that the American tourist, either as a prurient curiosity-seeker or in open defiance of his moral traditions and ordinary habits, drags the reputation of his country through the mud before the faces of the cynical, contemptuous Mexicans. One writer with an Anglo-Saxon superiority complex writes that "the American loses caste in the eyes of the Mexican. The Mexican ceases to look up to him as a higher grade of being." One man writes us that "the Mexican charges the dry American fifty cents for a drink of rotten liquor and then laughs at the darn fool." The common attitude ascribed to the Mexican who profits by these border conditions is, "If the Americans are big enough fools." Another says

"the low class Mexican is keen enough to take good American money for bad liquor and match his skill as a gambler," but that the cultured Mexicans have no respect for the sort of Americans who comes across the border for such purposes. "They do not patronize the border dives and are disgusted at seeing apparently respectable American women going into them." One teacher reports she went to Tia Juana with some Mexican friends. They were shocked and begged her repeatedly not to take that as a sample of Mexico.

It is the testimony of well informed persons that "most saloons and gambling dens on the border are owned or operated by Americans and supported by visitors from the United States." This is confirmed by county officials of San Diego. A pastor in the Imperial Valley, California, says that \$50,000 in checks paid out for vice across the border passes through the clearing house between Friday night and Monday noon. One immigration secretary writes: "In El Paso it was bridge gossip that pillars of the churches went to Juarez for drink and diversion." A cynical American business man says: "Our people run to Mexico to drink and return to America to pray." Ensenada, in Mexico, fifty miles south of San Diego, is a notorious center of bootleggers, and now Americans are planning to spend twenty millions there to establish the greatest gambling resort in the world outside of Monte Carlo. Of course Mexican officials profit by exploiting these American panderers to American curiosity, American appetites and American licentiousness. The gambling concessions are let to the highest bidder. Every public official exacts heavy tribute of the saloons and the dives. As a result the barren peninsula of Lower California has a *public revenue* next in size to that of the Federal District (Mexico City) and the oil fields of Tampico, not counting the private graft never reported in governmental accounts.

It is easy to exaggerate the significance of border incidents as factors in the relations between Mexican immigrants and the people on this side of the border. Correspondents in El Paso and San Diego blame the American press for undue publicity, and many indicate that this is merely a border problem, not seriously affecting interracial attitudes. "Low-class Americans use the opportunity to fleece tourists," says the secretary of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce, and "the better element among Americans are seeking to curb the activity of these institutions." But another Chamber of Commerce man says the border conditions are "a constant source of friction and fraught with possibilities of more serious disturbances between the two countries." One correspondent writes us that "sentiment in Mexico is growing against vicious border resorts." Another says: "Mexicans resent the use of their country for such purposes." Another says, "the better element in Mexico think Americans are taking advantage of the friendly relations between the countries to cross the border easily" for these purposes. Two Mexicans who submitted reports say that "Americans going to Tia Juana for liquor look with condescension upon the Mexicans, while the Mexicans are ashamed of the town and blame Americans for its condition." Another testimony is that "Americans are apt to judge Mexicans by the criminals who come across the border to escape punishment, and Mexicans to judge Americans by the lawless ones who come across the border to satisfy their appetites."

Most immigrants come through these border towns and sometimes get their first impressions of Americans there. A superintendent of

Mexican missions says: "The vicious American in Mexico causes Mexicans to despise and hate all Americans. I have had Mexicans with whom I was working say as they pointed out a drunken American, 'Why don't you make Christians out of your own people first?'" Better-class Mexicans do not patronize these American-owned border dives and they look with amazement and ridicule when they see respectable American women, "*just once*" trying the gambling devices and sampling the liquor.

Efforts taken by the Mexican government to clean up Juarez, Mexicali and Tia Juana have shown that President Calles and his cabinet regard these conditions as a menace to the relations between the two countries. A year or more ago it was proposed by the Mexican government that there should be a fifty-mile wide closed zone on the Mexican side, in which liquor, gambling and prostitution should be forbidden. The comparative failure of these efforts indicates not merely the strength of the graft motive in the local Mexican officials, but the strength of the vested interests of Americans in the business. One correspondent says "it is the disgrace of America that the American dollar prevents closing such scenes in all the border towns." The sheriff of San Diego county reports that the Mexican government for the upper half of Lower California is largely supported by the licenses of these institutions, and is reluctant to lose the revenue. Also it must be remembered that the United States Department of State *stands for the protection of American property rights in Mexico!*

The Christian Century of April 29 quotes a report that "the American administration is relying for its guidance" in the matter of closing the border at Tia Juana "on the recommendations of a man who, during the time he made his investigation was prominent at the bars and race track of Tia Juana and even had his official mail delivered in care of a Tia Juana bartender." "Mexico gets a black eye for containing such a spot, but it is America that supplies most of the customers and America that reaps the harvest. And now these American business men who have grown fat on the profits of this capital of vice are reported to be jubilant over the approach of the day when the last restriction hampering their business will be removed." The nation-wide interest in the Petet case and the nation-wide notoriety of Tia Juana cannot be regarded as negligible factors in the mental attitudes of Americans toward Mexicans and Mexicans toward Americans.

CONCLUSION

Your commission deems it beyond its function to draw conclusions and make recommendations in view of the facts which have been collected and summarized. Some of the material presented does represent the individual conclusions of our correspondents and it would be difficult for the every day kind of practical people who have submitted this material to wholly separate their opinions from the facts of their observation. However, individual opinions are in a sense some of the most important facts to be reported by a fact-finding commission, particularly one that deals with imponderable elements, as this commission does. The reports are naturally colored by the special interests of the writers. They are not all the expressions of missionary idealism. Some very practical business men have been frank in revealing their largely *economic* interest in the subject. The Mexican correspondents of the commission have not always seemed as frank in stating the *difficulties* of the situation. Their unflinching

courtesy makes it hard to secure direct testimony as to their real feelings. The commission hopes that there may be as sincere a facing of the facts and as candid a discussion of them by the Mexicans in this conference as on the memorable "Night of the Open Heart" at the Montevideo Conference.

Summarizing briefly the thought of different groups, the agricultural interests of the Southwest are urgent and practically unanimous in their demands for a large supply of Mexican labor. Many of the representatives of these interests recognize a considerable social responsibility for the laborers, primarily in the effort to prevent large labor turnover and to increase labor efficiency, but also with a real human interest. Contract labor, with return of laborers to Mexico seems so easy and convenient that many overlook its social and economic consequences for the country as a whole.

On the other hand the leaders of the Mexican government oppose free Mexican emigration to the United States. The Mexican government desires the work of Mexican laborers for the development of Mexico, even though immediate opportunities may not be as attractive as in the United States. The responsible immigration officials and the leaders of unionized labor in the United States oppose free Mexican immigration on the same grounds as were urged for our new immigration policy as embodied in the quota law of 1924.

It can hardly be said that the railroad or manufacturing interests of the country would be particularly anxious to maintain free immigration from Mexico, though they gladly utilize the Mexican laborers. It is the sugar beet and cotton and fruit interests that are most seriously concerned.

Apparently few of the teachers and religious leaders have very carefully considered an immigration policy toward Mexicans. It is easy to accept conditions as determined by the demands of the big interests and then make the best of them in the spirit of service and the confidence in the response of any alien group to our ideals when patiently and sympathetically presented.

The Mexican immigrants themselves are eager for a better chance, but scarcely ever recognize *their* obligation to the local community or the country which makes their better chance possible.

Regarding personal attitudes, it appears that the group whose interests are largely economic and those who are concerned with political consequences have a mild contempt for the Mexican laborer. There is at present comparatively little active prejudice, due to the fact that the Mexican immigrants are not aggressive. The groups influenced more largely by ideal motives, who, after all, are the only ones able to really *know* the Mexicans, recognize their very attractive qualities, but are oppressed by their dependency and their carelessness about living conditions. The Mexicans themselves apparently are able to maintain a self-satisfied scorn of money-chasing Americans, whatever their own economic condition. They do not appear to be keenly disturbed, as are Negroes and Japanese in the United States, about the popular feeling toward them, nor do they incline to co-operate with other alien groups in securing better understanding and appreciation. The situation is a challenge to those who recognize social problems before they have become insistent, while it is still possible to avoid the tragic results of our neglect in meeting the problems of the Negro and the Oriental in the United States.

We have received a number of suggested recommendations to be brought before this conference, and they will reach the Findings Committee on the same basis with any other resolutions which may be presented. But we prefer to place before the conference a simple statement of facts, presenting as concretely as possible the situation in international and interracial relations between Americans and Mexicans as it seems to over a hundred well-informed individuals, leaving to *you* to formulate from the facts presented and your discussion of them such findings as may seem to you warranted. We shall be satisfied if the presentation of these facts shall make clear that the large recent immigration from Mexico and the economic status of the Mexican immigrants has produced or accentuated international and interracial strains requiring the most serious consideration of all who work for world peace and brotherhood and the progress of every nation toward a Christian social order.

GEO. W. HINMAN,
Secretary.